



HUNTING

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LORD NORTH

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BY

LORD NORTH

“I want you to grow up good country gentlemen, doing your duty to your Sovereign, your country and neighbours, rich and poor, and fulfilling all the obligations of your station, and versed in all those pursuits and occupations which make a country life so pleasant and happy.”

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PREFACE.

THESE Notes on Hunting, primarily written for and dedicated to his grandchildren by Lord North, were only intended for private circulation, but the advice given is so sound and of such a practical character—in fact, just what should be put into the hands of every young sportsman—that they were felt to be worthy of a wider publicity ; and so his Lordship has been prevailed upon to give the necessary permission to publish the Notes in the present form.

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN.

Wroxton Abbey,

September, 1900.

WHEN I had a bad fall in 1898 and was laid up a long time, I put a little book together of the notes I had made from my own observations and what I had learned from experience while hunting the hounds myself, and from the maxims of celebrated old huntsmen with whom I had the advantage of being acquainted. These notes are only intended as headings to draw the attention of young sportsmen to what they ought to know and what they ought not to forget.

In a reduced form I had a few copies printed in the early part of this year, but some of my friends were kind enough to say it was too short, so I have restored the original text, and I now dedicate the little book to you, my dear grandchildren, because I want you to grow up good country gentlemen, doing your duty to your Sovereign, your country and neighbours, rich and poor, and fulfilling all the obligations of your station, and versed in all those pursuits and occupations which make a country life so pleasant and happy, when you have leisure to follow them. Beckford says

that Hunting is the soul of a country life, so I want you to grow up sportsmen—not, mind you, sporting men—for there is a vast difference between a sportsman and a sporting man—the latter is generally a very objectionable person.

This raises at once the question—What is sport? Sport is the wit, courage and endurance of man pitted against the instinct, cunning, courage and endurance of the wild animal.

In England, then, hunting, shooting and fishing are legitimate sport.

HUNTING.

Wild Stag hunting,
Fox hunting,
Hare hunting,
Otter hunting and the
pursuit of the carted Stag.

As for this last, though I personally agree with Mr. Jorrocks that you might as well “unt a hass,” I include it in the list of sport because the same qualities are required of man, horse and, to a great extent, of hound, for it as in other hunting, and in game countries, where Fox hunting is next to impossible, it is distinctly desirable. Such packs also afford great pleasure to the residents within their limits, and to those professional gentlemen who cannot afford time to hunt with Fox hounds. They are also the cause of large sums of money being spent in the districts in which they hunt.

SHOOTING.

All wild shooting.

But though the pheasant battue requires quick decision and skill in shooting, I rather doubt if it really comes under the head of sport. Still, it is useful in training the mind and eye to quickness of decision and action.

FISHING.

All fly fishing, trolling, and, I suppose, sea fishing.

But what we have to consider here is the grand old national sport of Fox hunting.

Hunting is a science, and you must remember that what is a pleasure and recreation to you, is as serious a matter of business to the Master of the hounds, and his huntsman and his whippers-in, as law is to the lawyer, or surgery to the surgeon.

If you study the science of hunting you will find your pleasure wonderfully increased and you will be able to form a more just opinion of huntsmen and their ways.

The great outlines and rules of hunting remain the same, but the application of them varies with the countries in which hounds hunt. Thus a quick mode is suitable to some countries and a slower mode to others.

It is therefore well to visit other packs occasionally and see what goes on there, and so improve

your knowledge of the craft, but for sport, it is far better to stick to one pack, taking the "good and bad" meets as they come. Selecting "good meets" often ends in disappointment.

Study the nature and habits of the fox. Study the points of the hound, so that you may be able to tell a good-shaped hound from an indifferent animal. Study his nature, his habits and various qualities. Some hounds are better at finding a fox, some can carry the line over dry fallows and down hard roads better than others. Study their pedigrees and you will find these qualities are hereditary. Learn their names, watch them at work, and you will find that what to the generality of the field has been a dull day's sport, "a good day for hounds," as some call it, has been a most amusing, enjoyable and instructive day for you.

To pick up the above knowledge it is of course necessary frequently to visit the kennel. Huntsmen like people who really take interest in them, to go and see the hounds, and I have often heard them regret so few people come to look at the hounds during the summer months.

By visiting the kennel you will also learn a lot about the interior economy ; the feeding, the doctoring of the hounds, and endless useful knowledge ; and you will be surprised to find how absolutely ignorant nine people out of ten are who go out hunting, and how the most ignorant talk the most.

Your affectionate grandfather,
NORTH.

HUNTING.

HUNT SERVANTS.

HUNT servants are in a somewhat exceptional position. They should never forget, and gentlemen should always remember, that they are the Master's servants, and not the servants of the public.

All hunt servants, huntsmen, whippers-in, kennelmen, studgrooms, second horsemen, should be sober, respectable, trustworthy men, smart and clean in appearance, civil and well-mannered. The character of the hunt may be fairly judged by the manners and turn-out of the servants.

A huntsman should be keen about his profession, good-tempered, persevering and patient ; firm in his opinion but not conceited—conceit is a fatal failing in a huntsman. He should be thoroughly acquainted with the nature and habits of the fox, and with those and the diseases of the hound. He should be fond of his hounds and always with them, walking them out and playing with them, and let him remember Captain Anstruther Thomson's excellent advice, "Stay at home with your hounds and wear a white neck-cloth." In the field he should be a man of resource, for a fox is a wild animal and cannot be hunted

mathematically, and able to adapt himself to the circumstances of the moment and not be afraid of being bold when boldness is required. It is there that a huntsman shows his genius.

Of course huntsmen have their talents like other men. Some are better in the field than in the kennel, and so on, so you must not expect to get an absolutely perfect huntsman any more than anything else.

A huntsman should be a good horseman, so as to be able always to be with his hounds ; that is a good careful rider, for the art of riding to hounds consists in being as near as possible to hounds, with the least exertion and fatigue to the horse.

It is absolutely essential, and masters of hounds should always remember, that huntsmen and whippers-in should be well and safely mounted. They cannot do their work properly if they are not : and, indeed, their lives depend on it.

That the whippers-in should be good is of vital importance to the pack.

They should study their duties and perfect themselves in them, both in the kennel and in the field, and they should study their huntsman's ways so as to understand and even anticipate his wishes ; they should always address him as "sir," and should work cordially together and whip-in loyally to their huntsman, doing their work quietly and efficiently, and they should be good and careful horsemen.

The first whipper-in should certainly, as a rule, be with the huntsman when hounds are running,

but if they get away on the side where the second whipper-in is posted, he should go on with the huntsman, leaving the first whipper-in to bring on any hounds left behind. On the arrival of the first whipper-in the second whipper-in should fall back again into his place.

If by any accident the huntsman is not with the hounds, the first whipper-in should go on with them till he comes up, but he must on no account whatever steal the hounds from his huntsman, and jealously try to kill the fox without him.

The second whipper-in's place is behind, but not so far as to prevent his being able to render the assistance his duties require of him.

He must be careful not to leave any hounds behind in cover, to stop and bring on any hounds which may have divided on another fox, and be for ever "making" his hounds, so that none may be away unnoticed.

It is true that generally hounds which have been left behind either get on the line of the pack and rejoin it, or trot away home ; but being left out leads to all sorts of mischief and trouble—they may be bitten by cur dogs and so introduce madness into the kennel, &c., &c. Nothing in short is so bad for a hound as being left out.

He should hover about observing which way the hounds are tending, and so place himself as to be able if necessary to head the fox from a cover, or drain, view a fox coming back, get on to some point where he is likely to be required, and so on. In short the duties of whippers-in afford a wide scope

for their talents, but it by no means follows that an excellent whipper-in must make an excellent huntsman, their duties being widely different.

The boiler should be a man in whom implicit confidence can be placed.

Nothing is so upsetting to a huntsman, when young hounds are coming in from walk, and distemper and yellows may be raging, as to be obliged to go out hunting in mortal fear of what may happen in his absence.

He should be so far acquainted with the art of doctoring the hounds as to be able to carry out the huntsman's instructions perfectly, and in cases of necessity to know what steps to take during the huntsman's absence.

EARTH STOPPING.

Earth stopping is a very important matter, and in these days when the number of drains has increased to an enormous extent, is all the more difficult, because land owners like their own men to do the stopping, and occupiers are disinclined to allow others than their landlord's keepers, or their own men to do it, and neither of those are under the absolute control of the hunt, though they are paid by it, and farmers often trust too much to their men, who neglect to do it.

It is well, therefore, to keep a list of the earth-stoppers and their districts, and deduct something from their pay whenever a fox gets to ground through their negligence in their "stop."

“Stopping” means stopping the earths during the night.

“Putting to” means when it is done in the early morning.

Great care must be taken not to stop the foxes in, and this can easily be done by a lazy or careless man stopping the earths too late, and great care should be taken to unstopp them at night.

All main and large earths should be stopped for the season as soon as hunting begins, and opened as soon as there are signs of cubs. Great care should be taken when thus stopping them not to stop any unfortunate animal in. In the spring, then, they should be “put to” when necessary, later in the morning, so as to be sure the vixen has returned to her home and so avoid any accident happening to her.

Drains should be run with terriers and then stopped at the beginning of the season with stakes or small drain pipes (which are best) made so as to allow the water to run freely. Iron grates are often stolen.

THE HOUNDS.

Form your pack according to the country in which it is to hunt.

Breed from the very best blood that you can get, but stick to the same sort.

Without nose hounds cannot hunt, and without pace they cannot catch a fox. These two things must therefore be combined.

A badly shaped hound cannot gallop, and with-

out good neck and shoulders he cannot stoop to a scent.

Good straight legs, with the bone carried well down, good shoulders, loins and thighs, back, feet. chests and with plenty of room for the lungs are essential points.

Breed with plenty of bone, and never breed



A FAULTY HOUND.

from a faulty hound, however good ; but exception may be made in favour of a dog whose lineage has been so perfect as to justify the assumption that the defect complained of is accidental, but special care must be taken that the bitch he is put to is of perfect symmetry and inheritor of it, and remember a vice cannot be bred out.

POINTS OF A HOUND.

Feet.—Round and close like a cat, a wee bit turned in.

Knees.—Big and flat. To be back at the knee is bad.

Foreleg.—Straight, with plenty of good bone



A PERFECT HOUND.

well carried down to the foot and quite straight and short between the knee and the foot. Bone may be very big without being ponderous, for example, the Belvoir Weaver entered in 1906 measures :—(Girth $34\frac{1}{2}$ inches, Arm $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches, Below knee $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches, Height 24 inches.)

Forearm.—Strong, with plenty of good muscle.

If the elbows turn *out* a wee bit it does not much matter. If they turn *in* it matters a great deal.

Thighs.—Big and muscular.

Quarters.—Round and strong.

Hocks.—Well let down ; big, clean and strong.

There should be great length between the hip and the hock.

Stifles.—Powerful and well bent.

Couplings.—Short, as distinct from slackness of back and shortness of ribs.

Back.—Broad, muscular and flat, not chopped off at the stern, which should be well filled on to the back. A roach back, *i.e.*, a bent one, is fatal.

Neck.—Well set on ; muscular, long, arched and symmetrical.

Shoulders.—Long and sloping, well back, strong at the withers, which should be narrow at the top, muscles flat at the side.

Chest.—Deep and broad.

Ribs.—Strong, and springing well from the back.

Head.—Not too flat ; long, strong and refined. Forehead strong and long. Jaws square ; under jaws are bad. Lips deep and loose. In bitches the head should be more elegant.

Nose.—Large and nostrils wide.

Eye.—In the dog the eye should be bold. In bitches more refined, but showing determination.

Always ascertain personally the qualities of a hound you propose to breed from, and be sure he is good in his work and has plenty of tongue.

The Dam is of quite as much importance as the Sire, even more so, for she generally imparts all the good qualities of her blood more than the dog.

Never breed from or keep a hound because of his good looks only, and never breed from a mute hound.

Do not be in a hurry to draft a young hound because he does not enter well the first season; many such hounds turn out excellent hounds in the end.

Some hounds become jealous, and so sometimes take to running mute.

A babbler, a laggard and a skirter, are as bad as a mute hound. Draft them at once.

TREATMENT AND TRAINING OF HOUNDS.

A puppy at walk should have plenty of good nourishing food; but he should not be allowed to get too fat, as it is apt to make him crooked, and if distemper should attack him it will go all the harder with him. He should have full liberty and never be tied up.

Give instructions that on the first sign of distemper a dose of castor oil is to be given at once and the huntsman informed.

Puppies with distemper should be kept clean and warm, but with plenty of fresh air; keep them out of draughts.

Mr. Vyner in his "Notilia Venatica" recommends the following pills. I have found them excellent as a tonic after distemper. They make

up rather large, but can be divided and two pills given instead of one.

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Quinine | 24 | grains |
| Gentian powder | $\frac{1}{2}$ | oz. |
| Bark powder | $1\frac{1}{2}$ | oz. |
| Cinnamon powder | $1\frac{1}{2}$ | drachms |
| Sulphuric acid | 8 | drops. |

To be made up into 8 pills with syrup, one to be given every morning fasting.

Feed your hounds each one according to his constitution, and so that they may run well together.

Feed cold and thick; but after hunting luke-warm, with a moderate quantity of flesh, but the less the better and be very careful indeed about the broth, which is apt to turn sour if left in the copper.

Take care your oatmeal is good old meal. New meal ferments and makes hounds purge. It should be thoroughly well boiled and become as hard as a rock after being poured into the coolers.

In summer feed thin, plenty of vegetables, young nettles, &c., should be given, and sometimes use biscuits instead of oatmeal for a change.

Don't wash your hounds, use brushes and hair gloves. As your young hounds come in from walk keep them separate from the pack and watch them carefully in case of any infection or rabies. Round them and physic and dress them in due time, and get the couples on them as soon as you can and walk them out on foot till they are ready to go to exercise with the pack.

Keep your hounds light and strong. The great art is to convert flesh into well-developed muscle. Keep their skins loose, and their coats clean, shiny and glossy.

Give your hounds plenty of long steady exercise during the summer and show them all sorts of riot. Go out as early as possible in the morning, and have them in good working condition before cub-hunting.

A huntsman should never rate or strike a hound.

A whipper-in should always correct a hound on the spot. If he cannot get at him at the moment, he should wait till he repeats the fault and then correct him sharply.

He should take care how he strikes a hound amongst others, as he may strike the wrong one.

It is no use damning a whipper-in if things go wrong, it will only confuse and very likely irritate a man who is doing his best. Speak to him seriously and point out his mistakes to him on the first opportunity while going home.

Never hurry your hounds in going to covert or returning home; 5 miles an hour is about the pace. Let them have plenty of reasonable freedom. Nothing looks so bad as a pack of hounds whipped up close to a huntsman's heels.

In going from covert to covert, and indeed when hounds are not running, avoid riding over seeds and wheat, &c., and breaking down fences and gates.

Whippers-in should "make" their hounds on

every possible occasion ; prevent their picking up bones, and see if any are lame.

We know no more about scent than we did 100 years ago. It depends on the state and nature of the soil, and the state of the atmosphere, and therefore is subject to rapid variations, and I think also on the fox itself.

CUB-HUNTING.

Some people now-a-days advertise their cub-hunting meets, but I think it is a bad plan, because cub-hunting is for the instruction of the young hounds, and the fewer people you have out with you, at any rate during the earlier stages of it, the better. It may, however, save a little trouble in sending round to the landowners and farmers where you are going, and who of course must be informed.

In cub-hunting remember that not only your young hounds have to be trained, but your two and three year old hunters, in which the pack should always be strong, have to be looked after and kept up to their work, which is of the greatest possible importance to the pack.

It is better not to take hounds into thick big woodlands until the undergrowth has fallen a bit. Hounds cannot so well, until it has fallen, force their way through it, the heat chokes them. They get dispirited and exhausted, and in well-rided woods young hounds may take to skirtling.

In cub-hunting rout out your litters well. Let your hounds find their fox themselves, and when

they find keep quite quiet. This applies also to the whippers-in. Let them stick to him and let the others go. The more cubs you kill the steadier will your young hounds be, but do not murder a lot of foxes in one place. A brace of well-killed cubs will do your hounds more good than a dozen mopped up ones. It is better to return another day and kill a brace more if it is necessary. It is best always to draw those places where you know there are litters. If cubs go to ground, dig them. It teaches your young hounds to mark them to ground.

In an enclosed country never let them into the open till nearly the end of cub-hunting, because whippers-in cannot get to them readily and they may get into mischief. When you do let them go, if they get on the line of an old fox, do not stop them if you desire to do so, till they get to some natural obstacle, such as a park wall, or throw up of themselves. Stopping them is likely to discourage them.

Teach your hounds to trust to themselves, and when you do assist them do so in such a way that they do not perceive it. It is a pitiful thing to see hounds staring up helplessly at their huntsman the moment they get into difficulties.

You must, of course, encourage hounds, but mind how you do it. With too much encouragement, you may make them speak to anything or nothing at all.

DRAWING COVERTS.

In drawing big woods and coverts, draw up wind, or on a side wind, your second whipper-in should be handy to you, down wind, that he may hear what is going on and stop to you quick when necessary—your first whipper-in should be forward, but not too forward; you can use your second horseman to watch particular points. When hounds are drawing whippers-in should be silent.

In drawing small places, whether gorses or spinnies, make as much noise as you can to prevent chopping a fox. Drawing down wind gives a fox a better chance of getting on his legs. If you are drawing a succession of small breaks, send on your second horsemen, or people you can trust to view away any fox that may be disturbed in those which are further off.

After a stormy wet night gorses are more likely to hold a fox than breaks, on account of the drip.

Use your horn as little as possible. In a big wood you can use it more freely and have a particular note to tell them when you are away with a fox. They will fly to it. Do not blow your horn behind hounds unless you want to stop them. It is well also to have a particular call for the second horseman.

It is said you should not leave a covert while a single hound remains in it. This may be carried too far and teach your hounds to hang. If hounds

are inclined to hang, keep moving on blowing them out. They will come to you sooner than if you stand still. Do not allow a hound to be struck or rated on coming out of cover. If you do he will only hang the more next time.

It is better not to draw a big strong cover late in the afternoon, and indeed, it is better not to draw so late that you may be obliged to stop your hounds. When you do stop hounds from their fox make as much of them as you possibly can ; stopping them always discourages them.

When hounds have been running hard in cover for some time and throw up, then is the moment to look out for him to break away. Most likely they have been too close to him for him to do so. But if he breaks, unless he is very beat, let him go. They will kill him quicker in the open.

When a fox breaks away he should not be holloa'd till he is fairly gone. It is well to see him safe in the next field before holloaing him ; a holloa may turn him back if given too soon, and foxes sometimes go out for a field and run back under the fence again. Don't holloa a fox over a ride in covert till he is well over it, you are likely to turn him back by so doing.

If you want a fox "held up" in cover, the whippers-in should stand well out in the field and tap with their whips against their boot or saddle. If he is to hold a fox in a particular quarter of a cover he must tap with his whip, but not shout, especially if hounds throw up, or he will get their heads up.

When gone away, the second whipper-in must see no hounds are left behind. If any are left, he should bring them on as quickly as possible, but without noise. In stopping hounds he should get to their heads, stop and rattle them back. Riding after them, cracking his whip and bawling is of no use whatever. If he has to turn hounds, after he has done so he must not then ride after them rating them, or he will drive them over the line, and in no case must he get between the hounds and the huntsman.

GONE AWAY.

Get away as quickly as ever you can with your fox, but if you have only a few hounds with you, stop them till the body comes up. If the body is tied to another fox, go back to it with the hounds you have got.

It is very often better and quicker to go and fetch your hounds than to stand blowing your horn and holloaing outside a covert. It is best to get up wind of them, blow them out, and then lay them on the line.

When hounds are running keep your eyes well forward to see what is likely to bring on a check and be prepared for it.

Watch your leading hounds and if you see them turn their heads, remember it, as if a check quickly follows and the field is pressing on them, that is very likely the place where he turned. The tail

hounds will often tell you how far they have carried the line.

If you see a sheep dog or cur dog running back to where the hounds have thrown up, you may be pretty sure he has run your fox.

If once a fox turns down wind he rarely ever turns up again.

In hunting a fox, never be in a hurry and never dawdle. Remember a fox is always moving. Make up your mind what you have to do and do it quickly and quietly, and always remember what really is "forward," that is, what his point really is, and from which he has been driven from some cause or other, and which he is sure to make if he possibly can. This I think is especially the case in the spring, when there are travelling foxes, also after a long frost or snow.

Checks are brought about either by the scent failing, by the fox having been headed and driven off his line by something or other, by being run by a dog, or by the field having ridden the pack off the line.

Let your hounds alone, and never cast them till you see they cannot recover the line by themselves.

When you do cast them, cast them well in front of you. This is not so easy as it seems. Hounds and huntsman must have great mutual confidence in each other, and the huntsman must be free from all pressure from behind. The late Lord Willoughby de Broke and Tom Matthews had this power over their hounds to an extent I have never seen in others except old George Beers. On a good

scenting day and on good scenting ground cast them quickly. On bad scenting days and bad scenting ground cast them more slowly.

The hounds nine times out of ten will have cast themselves up wind and have indicated by the way they swing themselves which way your fox turned ; but whether he turned to the right or to the left, it is almost a certainty that he turned *down* wind. If therefore they do not pick up the line by themselves, prolong their up wind unaided cast, just to satisfy yourself he has not gone up wind, and then cast them down wind without loss of time.

Make your casts wide enough and over the best scenting ground you can find.

Remember your fox may have got in somewhere inside your circle.

It is well to remember that a fox will pass over earths that are open and then change his mind and turn sharp back to them.

Do not make any fancy casts until you have made all the orthodox ones.

While casting whippers-in should leave the hounds quite alone. They are often too fond of interfering with them. Nothing sounds so bad as "Let 'em alone, Bill."

Be cautious before going to a holloa. With most people every fox they see is the hunted fox. They will sometimes holloa because they see the hounds, sometimes because they saw the fox an hour ago. It is therefore often the quickest way in the end to send a whipper-in, or some one you can really trust, to make sure the holloa is a true one,

that the man holloaing is doing so where he saw the fox, to ascertain for certain in what direction the fox was travelling, and how long it is since he saw him, and remember that generally they exaggerate the time, also that a fox nearly always turns as soon as he is lost sight of.

If you do decide on going to the holloa, *go as quick as ever you possibly can*, but do not start off at a mad gallop holloaing and blowing your horn ; if you do you will get your hounds' heads up, and when you want them to hunt they will be looking up at you, and be careful of running heel, when you lay them on.

Lord Henry Bentinck, referring to a huntsman galloping off with his hounds flogged up to him, remarks : "Often enough in being whipped up in this way to their huntsman, when crossing the line of the fox with their heads up, they first catch his wind and then as a matter of course they must take the scent heel-way, the fox as a rule running down wind."

Avoid "lifting" your hounds as a general rule. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to do so. For instance, you get on to a bit of very bad scenting ground, and are getting further and further behind your fox ; the pack can hardly work out the line, and you are virtually at a standstill. There is better scenting ground some fields beyond, and it is necessary to get on to it as soon as possible. Stop your hounds altogether, and take them quickly but quietly to the point you wish to lay them on at, but if that point is not far off, or sheep

or cattle are the hindering cause, then it is better to press them on than to "lift" them.

Sometimes when a fox runs into a small covert huntsmen stop their hounds and hold them round it on the chance that he has gone through it, and so save a few minutes. It is far better to let them hunt him through it. You may change foxes or another fox may go away with your hunted fox and there will then be two lines, and so on. If, however, the manœuvre is adopted, let your whippers-in keep a sharp look-out that your hunted fox does not slip back.

With a sinking fox and he running short, do not get excited, let your hounds work it out. Get their heads up and you will lose him.

With a sinking fox, unless you are getting very close to him, if the scent appears to get better take care you may not have changed foxes, because the scent of a sinking fox is weaker than that of a fresh one.

Old hounds know this, therefore watch them well. If they hold back you have changed foxes.

If a fox gets to ground always cast carefully round to be certain he is really there. He may have tried the place—gone in for a moment and come out again—or gone right through. Through neglecting this precaution some extremely ludicrous scenes occur.

If a beaten fox goes to ground it is better to dig him out if you can. People say, "Oh, spare a good fox for another day," but he will most likely die under ground.

It is useful sometimes to dig a fox for the good of the hounds, especially if they are short of blood, but the frequent digging of foxes is likely to encourage loafers to unstopp drains, &c., in order to earn a few shillings.

Always let your hounds have a good worry when they kill their fox.

GENERAL NOTES.

Mr. Jorrocks says "It is clearly the duty of every man to subscribe to a pack of 'ounds even if he has to borrow the money." The late Mr. T. Drake, speaking of a certain gentleman, remarked, "He doesn't know the rudiments of hunting. He doesn't know how to subscribe." It stands to reason that those who hunt should subscribe liberally to those packs with which they take their pleasure. The Secretaries of neighbouring hunts should combine to prevent niggards from shirking their duties.

Gentlemen should always turn out properly dressed for hunting. It is an insult to the master and the hunt in general not to do so.

The present fashion of turning out second horsemen in a sort of mufti which makes them look like third-class helpers in a livery stable is most objectionable. If a gentleman can afford a second horse, he can afford to dress his servant properly, that is in livery.

There are three hints with regard to riding to hounds which are often forgotten.

Take care at a fence to give the man in front of you plenty of room in case he should fall.

If you want to wake your horse up on nearing a fence remember that the spur is likely to stop him and put him out of his stride, therefore apply it

some strides from the fence, press him with your legs and keep his head straight.

In riding at a fence in company always keep a fair interval between you and the next man, especially if on the left-hand side of him, for horses generally, if they refuse, run to the left, and you then will avoid a collision.

In going to cover, gentlemen should always avoid doing damage by riding over seeds, wheat, &c., and should never disturb a cover likely to be drawn in the course of the day, by going through or near it. Motor-cars have come into general use since these notes were made. If you use one for going to cover always slow down when passing horses led or ridden ; always stop at least a mile from the meet, and never allow your car on any pretence whatever to follow the hounds.

Gentlemen should never talk to a whipper-in when on duty, and avoid assembling behind him when watching a ride in covert. Conversation is sure to ensue, which is certain to take off his attention from what he is doing, prevent his hearing what is going on, and very likely head the fox back or cause him to let the fox cross unobserved.

Gentlemen should never ride amongst the hounds, nor should they ride too close to hounds when going from covert to covert, and when running should never press on them so as to drive them over the scent. Many a time what might have been a good run has been ruined by this, nor should they follow a huntsman about when casting,

but stand perfectly still. When a fox is being broken up they should keep their horses well away from the hounds. The smell of blood excites them and causes them to kick at the hounds.

Gentlemen should watch hounds closely, and see and learn what they are doing; many fancy they are on the line again when they are really only casting themselves forward, and begin to niggle on, which interferes greatly with the cast and is most irritating to a huntsman.

If a gentleman is wide of the pack and sees the hunted fox and the hounds are on the line and within sight, he should not holloa, but wave his hat. If he lays down, let him be.

If they are at a check and well within hearing, he should stand exactly where he saw the fox and holloa and wave his hat, but he must be very careful not to ride the fox. If they are out of hearing he should mark the place exactly and go and tell the huntsman as quickly as possible.

Gentlemen, especially strangers, should always treat the farmers with courtesy. They are as a body most excellent, kind, hospitable men, who walk the puppies admirably, are always glad to see hounds, and even when they do not hunt themselves do all they can to promote the sport, and it is through them that hunting flourishes.

Gentlemen who do not farm themselves should purchase their forage from the neighbouring farmers if possible. I say if possible, because often farmers do not grow the necessary quality of oats. When possible, too, they should buy their horses from the

farmers. It is by these means that hunting benefits the farmers.

Enormous sums are spent in hunting which would be spent elsewhere were it not for hunting, and though some people cry out and say they get but little good out of it, still the whole country most certainly does reap the benefit, and in all sorts of ways profits by hunting, and would soon find out the loss were it given up. Hundreds of hunting men subscribe to Agricultural Societies, Horse Shows, etc., in counties with which they are in no way connected, except that they come and hunt there, and I would beg of them always to subscribe to the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution.

A cheery word of good morning or good evening and a sixpence for services rendered goes a long way with the foot people out hunting, and these too can be of the greatest help and assistance to the hunt. Depend upon it, the more you keep in with them the better it will be for you. They are quite as keen as you are about the sport, and Masters should do all they can to encourage the good feeling and never disappoint them by meeting at one place and going off to draw at another.

I would recommend young gentlemen to remember the following lines. The rhymes are perhaps imperfect, but the advice is excellent :—

If *you* happen to think that the huntsman is wrong,
And imagine *you* know where bold Reynard has gone,
Keep that thought to *yourself*, for the language is strong

That's addressed to the young British sportsman.

HINTS FOR SECOND HORSEMAN.

A second horseman should always be a steady, sober, trustworthy man, a good horseman, smart in appearance, sharp and quick-witted, should always think what he is about and keep his head on his shoulders.

He has special care of the horses which are to hunt that day, and in company with the head groom and the farrier, see that the shoeing is all right, that the horses are properly turned out, and that the saddles, bridles, etc., are properly put on, and the girths and safety bars in safe and proper order.

He should never be behindhand, but start in good time. Five-and-a-half miles an hour is about the best pace to travel at. He must not dawdle along, and on no account whatever stop at a Public House on his way to cover. Nothing looks so disreputable as a second horseman drinking on the road.

In going to the meet and returning home he should avoid riding over seeds and wheat and doing other damage, and on no account pass through or disturb a covert likely to be drawn that day.

If a horse should fall lame, and he cannot detect on which leg, he should trot the horse, which will most likely toss up his head as he puts down the sore leg or foot.

On arrival at the meet, he should get his horses

into a stable or stackyard, get them to stale, examine their feet all round, get them tidy, and see to their girths, etc.

He should keep a look-out for his master, so that on his arrival he may not have to look for his horses.

He should communicate any instructions the groom may have given him regarding the horses, especially if his master has been away from home, and tell him how the horses came to covert, if they coughed, etc.

He must remember that the master of the hounds is supreme in the field, and obey any instructions he may receive from him.

He should remain with the hunt second horsemen, and keep to the bridle roads and lanes, carefully shut all gates behind him, and never jump his horse if he can avoid doing so.

He should come up to his master when a fox is killed or run to ground, taking care never to ride into the pack. He should keep his eye on his master at a check, if the second horses happen to be near enough, that he may see if he is wanted. By keeping with the hunt second horses he will do less damage and his master will find him more readily.

He should learn the country thoroughly, the names of the villages and coverts and their positions, the roads, lanes and bridle roads. Experience will soon teach him the probable run of a fox, and let him remember that a fox which has once turned down wind rarely turns up wind again.

He should bear in mind the three following rules, though they apply more especially to hunt servants than private second horsemen.

1. If he sees the hunted fox and the hounds are on the line and in sight, he should stand still and wave his hat. If he lays down, let him be.

2. If they are at a check and well within sight and hearing, he should holloa and wave his hat ; he must take care not to ride the fox, but note exactly where he saw him and in which direction he was travelling.

3. If they are too far off to hear his holloa, he should carefully mark the place and go at once as quickly as possible and tell the huntsman.

He should get his horse to stale whenever he can.

Never give a heated horse cold water or let him stand in the cold ; it is apt to bring on colic.

When he is sent home when hounds are drawing a covert, he should wait till they have gone away for fear of heading the fox or doing other mischief.

He should travel home at an easy pace, not slow enough to allow a horse to get a chill, nor fast enough to tire him, but he must not dawdle.

He should ride on the grass by the side of the road when it is not deep. If it is deep, then, on the *side* of the road. If the horse is tired, the road itself is the best ; anyhow, always keep on the road when it gets dark.

If he puts his horse up at an inn, he should throw the rug over him inside out, for fear of ringworm, &c.

When he puts a horse up, he should loosen his

girths, take off his bridle, give him some chill water, that is very lukewarm water ; that is better than gruel, which is apt to turn sour, and give him a bit of good old sweet hay. On no account give him hay which is at all musty. A few handfuls of good oats are better than that. Pick up his feet and examine them all round and get him to stale. Some horses stale better after having had their drink. Ten or fifteen minutes is quite long enough to stop.

On arrival home report at once to the groom what the horses have done, whether it has been a hard day or not : if they have coughed or fallen lame, hit themselves or been down, and if he has put up, and where.

POULTRY CLAIMS.

The claims sent in for loss of poultry have become a very serious question in hunting finance. Were you to see the enormous number sent in you would imagine all the poultry in the Empire was hatched and reared in your country, and all the foxes in England were collected in it to devour them. No doubt the majority of these losses are *bondâ fide* losses, but people forget that poultry have other foes than foxes. Disease, cats, dogs, rats and other vermin, to say nothing of two-legged foxes, are often the real culprits. But if they lose poultry they put it all down to "the fox" without enquiry. Many, too, are utterly careless about shutting up their fowls at night, which, of course, is exposing them to almost certain destruction. I regret to say, too, that there is a class of man in every country who desires to get a certain sum out of the hunt and sends in claims, expecting only to get a certain proportion. These claims are generally fictitious, and fowls are charged for that have never been in existence at all. I have heard of men who, on taking a new farm, have calmly asked, "How much can be made out of the hunt?" Great care is therefore necessary in dealing with these claims, which should be at once investigated, and, if just, paid promptly.

Foxes are often accused of killing lambs.

Sometimes they do, but it is very often, indeed, that the real culprit is the shepherd's own dog. Shepherds often give the dead lambs to their dogs, and hence the mischief. One of the uses of advertising the meets is to enable farmers to know when to expect hounds, and so shut up their sheep and stock and prevent any accident which might possibly occur through hounds running through them.

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